CARNIVAL- 1939

Jacksonville, Ala., Record
February 10, 1939

Negroes Loyal to Mardi Gras Monarch

The Zulu King—colored Monarch of Mardi Gras—arrives by barge at the New Basin canal and boards his throne float for the colorful trip through the main street of New Orleans Negro section. During the last day of Mardi Gras festivities, February 21, Negroes meet the tug boat, rechristened a Royal Yacht, and demonstrate their loyalty to their "monarch."

Winston-Salem, N. C., Sentinel
February 12, 1939

Plain Folk Make Great Mardi Gras More Democratic

New Orleans, Feb. 11 (AP).—Society still dominates Mardi Gras in this city of the Good-Time Charley, but the plain folk are beginning to make the aristocratic carnival season a little more democratic.

For almost a century the blue-bloods have ridden through jammed streets on glittering floats standing in silks behind masks, and then danced at closed balls with their ladies.

Timothy citizen had the privilege of watching from the curbing as the floats went by and catching a trinket a masker tossed his way, but when it came time to dance Timothy was on the outside looking in. Not actually. He wasn't allowed that close to the ballroom. There was justice, perhaps, to the arrangement. The aristocrats paid for the balls and the floats although it isn't likely Mr. Blue Blood would have paraded if Mr. Plain Blood hadn't been there to watch him.

Their Party

Anyway, it was their party, so they kept it to themselves and issued a limited number of invitations within their own circle.

Mardi Gras took a nose dive during the depression, but since then 14 new maskers' krewes have sprung up or been revived—almost as many as had functioned at any one time in the 82 years of organized carnival some of these are very, very social too. In addition, one major night parade, a children's parade and neighborhood parades have joined the procession.

All the balls are masked affairs except one and this year, the peak, there will have been 39 in the 40 week days between start of the carnival season, the twelfth night after Christmas, and Fat Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday.

Among the balls are those given by fraternities, sororities, social organizations and white national and racial groups upon which society turns blank eyes.

It Costs Money

Yet even this number of celebrants is limited to a few thousand for it costs money for the intangible pleasure of dressing fancily for a ball.

The mass of the people, although they may be delighted watching the parades which haven't varied in essential detail in 50 years, must find their own fun scampering around the streets on Fat Tuesday.

On that day between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. they can dump their suppressed desires out the window, hide behind a mask, and dress as they may have wanted to dress all their lives: in inexpensive costumes ranging from sailor suits to bustles.

There are five major parades, those of the Krewes of Momus, Proteous, Comus, Rex and Hermes. The balls of the first three, in which membership depends on social position, are closed to the public.

All Social

Rex, and Hermes, now three years old, are made up of socialites and business men. Invitation to those two balls may be obtained through local hotels or business connections. The other major balls with perhaps one exception, are all social events.

The history of the local carnival season has been rough in spots. It has had some jealousies. There was a Mardi Gras around here before there was a town; yet it has been less than a hundred years since the Saxons began horning in on the Creoles to put the carnival season on its feet.

They made it genteel, used imagination mixed with humor, and gave it form. Some of the best humor—satire—has been lost but the form remains. To the suggestion by radical souls that some of the humor of the parades be restored, that some of the established form be changed, conservatives say no. They say Mardi Gras would be something else then, but it would not be Mardi Gras.

Tradition Phooey

The Negro parade, undisturbed by tradition, is the only one intentionally funny.

Iberville, sailing up the Mississippi on Fat Tuesday in 1699 named an arm of the river a few miles above the Gulf Mardi Gras Bayou.

That was 17 years before the town was founded. Twenty-seven years after that, there are complaints the poor were spending their money in public houses and the rich theirs on balls, picnics and parties.

By 1771 there was carnival masking. By the turn of the nineteenth century dances for children. By 1817 the city had a $100,000 ballroom.

That was when so many cutthroats were loose in the town that every masker had to show his face to a policeman before entering a dance.

Drag-Out Affair

There were organized street pageants certainly by 1838, but the party was getting rough. Hooligans began spoiling the custom of throwing bon bons by heaving quick-lime instead.

This happy practice of blinding people continued quite a while. The cutthroats were still around. Masking, therefore, was alternately permitted and forbidden, ladies were knocked down with bricks or hit in the eye with a handful of mud, and mid-way in the century the firemen's annual parade was big stuff, not Mardi Gras.

By 1853 outsiders, the Mobile Cowbellions who annually parade in the Alabama city on New Year's Eve, were annoying the old French and Creole families by taking a hand in Mardi Gras. So a newspaper, The Crescent, complained that the old regime had "fallen into the list of forgotten things and the sway over manners has passed to the swine-eating Saxons."

Perry Young, Mardi Gras historian, points out that it was neither the French nor the Creoles who lifted carnival into big time by organizing in 1857 the Mistick Krewe of Comus, now oldest and still most aristocratic of all Mardi Gras carnival clubs.

No French There

Young says six Mobilians founded Comus and that none of the 19 organizers had a French or Creole name.

The Civil War put a crimp in carnival for a time, as did reconstruction in a way, but the twelfth night revelers and Momus were organized. They're still going strong. Carnival got into full stride when the Krewe of Rex appeared in 1872.

One of the principal reasons for organizing Rex was to honor the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia, a visitor here at that time. The first King of Rex was Louis Solomon and the first $100 contributed toward formation of the Krewe was made by a lottery chief.

The next year Rex took full control of carnival which began to blossom famously with clever, beautiful floats, full of imagination and satire on current events. When the Krewe of Momus cuttingly satirized General U. S. Grant in 1877 there was a hurly-burly.

Any Kind of Theme

Satire faded from the parades which now devote themselves to legendary, mythological, literary, or historical themes.

The float rider who in 1877 might have worn a grasshopper suit surmounted with a head of General Grant, cigar, campaign hat, whiskers and all, now wears a silk costume and an expressionless mask.

As the years passed, other organizations sprang up, but probably the strangest was the Mystic Club, formed right after the World War by members of Comus whose parade had been disbanded because of the conflict.

These Comus members many of them over 70 years of age and all aristocrats, wanted to have at least one more carnival ball. Since Comus could not take part, they organized the the Mystic Club for married people only.

Now fully half the organizers are dead but the club continues brilliantly, and still gives the only ball for married people.

Membership in all the carnival clubs is supposed to be secret because otherwise, these members say, they would be deluged by requests for invitations which could not be granted. The element of mystery and exclusiveness has its appeal, too, perhaps.

In 1934, the Association of Commerce originated the idea of a children's parade. About 150 professional and business men contribute $10 a year toward this project. The city's public and parochial schools are in the Krewe of Nor (New Orleans Romance)

and membership is limited to approximately 50.

School heads list the names of children outstanding for scholarship, conduct, popularity and personality. The names are put into a wheel at city hall. Two names are drawn, one for the queen, one for the king. These names are not made public till the day of the parade for secrecy rules in Nor as in the larger organizations.

Mobile, Ala., Press
February 10, 1939

PROGRESS SEEN IN COLORED CARNIVAL

Parade Will Be Staged on Davis Avenue on Tuesday Afternoon

An innovation in this year's Mardi Gras program will be the parade sponsored by the Colored Carnival Association at 3:30 o'clock Tuesday afternoon, February 21, the day of the culimination of festivities.

The parade will be confined to colored participants, who will stage a representative procession along main streets of the colored business section and Davis Avenue. This event has been made possible by the co-operation of Sidney Simon, who obtained a $50 gift for the group from the Mobile Carnival Association, association leaders announced.

The line of March will consist of group displays, decorated bicycles, maskers, floats and automobiles. The colored association claims the support of the colored schools, the Y. M. C. A. and the Y. W. C. A., the order of Elks, several churches and other organizations.

There will be three group prizes awarded from the porch of the Community Center, St. Anthony and Lawrence Streets, immediately after the parade: $10, $5, and $2.50; four bicycle prizes of $7, $5, $3, and $2, and four prizes of $7.50, $5, $2.50, and $1.50 for individual maskers.

Plans have been conceived by the organization to obtain additional revenue from other sources that the prizes may be increased. All participants seeking prizes in the parade must register at the office of the Y. M. C. A., E. S. Peters, at St. Anthony and Lawrence Streets, one week before the day of the parade. Additional details on the parade and prizes will be given participants when they register.

Dr. W. L. Russell is chairman of the Colored Association; S. D Mitchell, secretary; Dr. J. A. Franklin, treasurer. Other members include: Prof. F. Glover Evans, Dr S. A. Herman, Ed Langster, E. S Peters and Dr. J. F. Taylor.

Mobile, Ala., Press
February 22, 1939

MOBILE COLORED PEOPLE PARADE

Winston A. Allan and Ruby Morgan Rule Over Celebration of Group

Mobile's colored population celebrated their first organized Mardi Gras yesterday.

There was a parade Tuesday afternoon, participated in by floats, decorated bicycles and numerous marching organizations.

Last night Winston A. Allan elected by popular vote, was crowned king and Ruby Morgan, of the Dunbar High School, queen, at ceremonies in the Colored Community Center. Following these exercises, the rulers paraded, the queen riding in a limousine and the king on a float which participated in earlier carnival processions.

Manuel Carter was grand marshal of last night's parade.

Afternoon Parade Also

The Mobile Colored Carnival Association, a group separate from that which conducted the evening parade, staged its procession at 3:30 p.m., with marching groups, decorated bicycles, pedestrian maskers and a number of floats.

Colored organizations represented were that branch of the Boy Scouts Broad Street School, Dunbar High School, Williamson School, the colored Y. M. C. A., Alabama State Teachers' College and others.

Band and drum corps included those of St. Peter Claver's School, Most Pure Heart of Mary School, 'Bama State Band, Excelsior Band, Melody Masters, a clown band and a jazz orchestra from a traveling minstrel show.

Prize Awards Made

Prizes were awarded as follows:

Bicycles, Samuel T. McDaniels, first; Juliette Frazier, second; Mary Williams, third; Tommie Loftin, Jr., fourth.

Individual maskers, Leo Nathan as Little Red Riding Hood, first; John I. Smith, second; Clyde White, third, and William Ivory, fourth.

Marching groups, Williamson School, sponsored by Katherine Bennett, first; Broad Street School, sponsored by Florence Howard, second; Emerson School, sponsored by Jamie Buck, third.

Floats: Los Amigos Club of Dunbar High School, sponsored by Elinor Nelson, first; "Three Men In A Boat," sponsored by Clarence Roberson and Esau Smith, postmen, second; Boy Scout encampment, sponsored by James O'Neil, third.

The prize list for the afternoon parade was $70.

Mobile, Ala. Times
February 21, 1939

NEGROES READY FOR CARNIVAL

The first negro Mardi Gras pageant in the history of Mobile will be held here at 3:30 p.m. today.

The parade is sponsored by the Colored Carnival association, a newly formed Mardi Gras unit. Headed by King Tut, the king's parade is scheduled to start at 9 p.m. from the Colored Community center, and move east on St. Anthony st., to Hamilton, south to St. Francis, west to Warren, north to Davis ave., and then west to Lafayette st., where it will turn and retrack its way to the starting point.

Music will be furnished by several bands, and prizes will be offered for the best floats, decorated bicycles and individual maskers.

Reigning monarch of the negro Mardi Gras is Winston A. Allan. Ruby Morgan, Dunbar High school, will be queen. Manuel Carter will serve as grand marshal.

Mobile, Ala., Register
February 8, 1939

Davis Avenue Carnival Plans Are Progressing

Plans are progressing rapidly for the first annual Mardi Gras parade to be held in the Davis Avenue section under the sponsorship of the Colored Carnival Association, it was announced last night by Dr. W. L. Russell, chairman of the colored association.

The parade will take place at 3:30 o'clock February 21—Fat Tuesday.

Group displays, decorated bicycles maskers, floats and automobiles will be in the line of march. The colored association has the support of colored schools, the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A., the Order of Elks, several churches and other organizations.

There will be three group prizes of $10, $5 and $2.50; four bicycle prizes of $7, $5, $3 and $2, and four prizes of $7.50, $5, $2.50 and $1.50 for individual maskers.

Mobile, Ala., Press
February 21, 1939

Colored Carnival Parade Set for This Afternoon

Mobile's first colored Mardi Gras festivities were scheduled to get under way at 3:30 o'clock this afternoon.

They will consist of a parade, in which numerous cash prizes will be awarded, and a procession by a colored king, to be followed by a coronation in the Community Center on St. Anthony Street.

The Colored Carnival Association's parade will be given as part of that new organization's efforts to build up Mardi Gras interest among Mobile's colored population.

Prizes for the best floats, decorated automobiles, bicycles and individuals will be awarded by the association when this afternoon's parade disbands at the Community Center. Several bands will be in the parade.

Winston A. Allan has been chosen king of the colored carnival by popular vote and will reign as King Tutte. He has selected numerous knights. Their parade will start at 9 o'clock tonight, to be followed by the coronation. Ruby Morgan of Dunbar High School will be queen

Manuel Carter will be grand marshal of the parade tonight.

The parades will begin at the Community Center on St. Anthony Street and move east to Hamilton, south to St. Francis, west to Warren, north to Davis Avenue, west to Lafayette and counter-march back on Davis Avenue to Lawrence and to the starting point on St. Anthony Street.

Mobile, Ala., Register
February 16, 1939

New Prizes Announced For Colored Parade Here

Dr. W. L. Russell, president of the Colored Carnival Association, announced Wednesday night that in addition to awards already announced, there would be prizes of $20, $12.50 and $7.50 for the best decorated floats or automobiles taking part in the parade to be held Mardi Gras Day.

He urged that all organizations or individuals desiring to enter the competition register with E. F. Peters, secretary of the colored Y. M. C. A., not later than February 17. The parade is to be held in the Davis Avenue section.

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FLORIDA EVOLUTION

n.y 3 mos 3-6-39

Palm Beach Society, celebrating the traditional height of the season on Washington's Birthday, staged an amusing satire of itself in the parade which preceded the Circus Ball. Representatives of three eras of "society" at the Florida resort were shown in the procession. Above is Miss Palm Beach of 39 A. D.

A Seminole Indian girl, as one of the first of the American visitors to Palm Beach, brings the historical parade down to the year 1639.

Houma, La., Courier
February 24, 1939

Name Zulu King, Queen for Negro Parade Tuesday

John Billizon was named the Zulu King following a count of the votes for the office by the local negroes who will present a Carnival Parade today thru the streets of the city. Named as queen was Louise Rainer, and maids were Hilda Keys, Mary Verret and Bonnie Minder, all of Houma.

Under the sponsorship of the negro veteran's organization a parade consisting of the Zulu king, his queen, her maids, a tribe of Carnival Indians and the negro Boy Scout troop will parade through the streets of the city Tuesday.

Music and floats will also be featured during the event. The publicity committee headed by H P. Smith, stated that visitors from surrounding communities expected to come to the city to witness the parade and take part an auditorium.

Miss Adelaide Moffett, representing the visitors of the Winter of 1939, rides in the parade as the Miss Palm Beach of today.

Penalda-Conde, La. Chief
February 25, 1939

COLORED PEOPLE STAGE MARDI GRAS CELEBRATION

The colored citizens of this city and vicinity staged a Mardi Gras celebration here Tuesday which proved very colorful and highly enjoyable to the colored people of this community, and brought a large number of colored visitors here from all parts of the surrounding country.

The celebration consisted of a street parade in the afternoon and a ball at the True Friends' hall at night, at which the crowning of the queen was the main feature.

Marshal Jacobs, impersonated King Bozo, and Evelyn Lefort was queen. The dukes and maids were as follows: Leo Levy, duke, Ruby Lefort, maid; Edward Blouin, duke, Evelyn Schonberg, maid; Curtis Bix, duke, Inez Levy, maid; Willie Lawson, duke, Albertine Nelson, maid; Edward Hawkins, duke, Eva Lefort, maid. Elsa Jacobs, Eva Descenser, and Rita Cecile LeBlanc were flower girls.

King Bozo arrived in Donaldsonville at 2:30 p. m., via the steam ferryboat, Bisso. He was met at the ferry landing by the queen and members of his court and a large number of his subjects. He was heartily greeted and welcomed, and the keys of the city were presented to him by Romana Jacobs.

The king then mounted his float a truck, loaned for the occasion by Montero and Brande, and the queen entered her float, a truck loaned by Philip Ferris. Both trucks were appropriately decorated for the occasion. Other decorated floats bearing the dukes and maids were loaned by the Wright Furniture Company E. E. Haydel and Gus James.

Headed by Toot Johnson's band in a truck, loaned by Elray Kocke Service, the parade traversed the principal streets of the city, and pulled up at the True Friends' hall where it disbanded.

The celebration culminated with a ball at the True Friends' hall at night, the principal feature of which was the crowning of the queen, which took place at 10 o'clock. Mona Lee presented the crown to the queen. Music for the ball was also furnished by Toot Johnson's band.

The committee in charge of the event was composed of the following: George Williams, chairman; Nick Claverie, James Sullivan, Bradford Hamton, Edward Howard, James Quezerque and John Allen.

The committee in charge of the celebration extend thanks to those who were enough o loan trucks for the parade and to all those who contributed to or helped in any way in making the event a success. They say that they will ry to stage a bigger Mardi Gras parade and celebration next year.

Houma, La. Courier
March 1, 1939

Negro Parade Big Success on Mardi Gras

Houma has reason to be proud of its negroes. They put on a carnival parade the like of which has not been seen for many years in the old Oyster City. Much credit is due King John Billizon, William Smith, Edison Calloway and Joseph Smith for making the big colored parade a great success.

Composed of some ten really old floats that must have tried the ingenuity of their originators, the parade led by King Billizon started down Lafayette Street, then up Main Street to the Intracoastal Canal where King John as King Zulu met his fair and beautiful queen. She arrived by boat which had come from the end of Lafayette Street via Bayou Black, the Houma Canal, and the Intracoastal Canal. Louise Rainer was queen. She wore a beautiful regal robe and a crown of jewels that actually dazzled in the sunlight. As King John Billizon commenetd assive welcomed his queen the large colored crowd roared. Then the parade proceeded down Main St. again.

The many colored maskers had the thousands of onlookers laughing all the time. One particular clown really took the prize. He wore a frock coat, top hat, and pushed a baby carriage with life like baby doll in it. The manner in which he carried on with his hat, carriage, and black baby had the crowds bursting with glee.

Edison Calloway says that never before were the colored people so united and cooperative. Everyone joined in to lend whatever assistance he could possibly render.

John Bellizon commented as follows. "We want to thank the many merchants of Houma for their kind assistance and donations. Also Mr. Seashore for the use of his boat. Without the cooperation of the colored and white leaders we could not have put on that parade. It was a lot of work and we enjoyed every minute of it. We hope to have a bigger one next year. No doubt the Negro Park will be finished by that time, in which case the main ceremonies will take place in it."

The commander of the Negro Legion Post, William Smith, who also took a leading part in organizing the Negro Parade, stated that his organization was glad to cooperate, and wanted to prove to the people of Houma that the colored people can really do something when everybody works together. "The many Houma concerns that lent their trucks and drivers, and the hundreds of people who bought tickets for the carnival proved that they were with us all the way." Continuing Mr. Smith says, "We are all happy over the event, and we hope that we made the thousands of Houma people happy. We did our best to put on a good show, and judging from the comments we think we did."

CARNIVAL - 1939

EVERYBODY GAMBOLS AND CAVORTS AS NEW ORLEANS CELEBRATES MARDI GRAS

Years may come and years may go, but the enthusiasm with which New Orleans enters into the celebration of its famed Mardi Gras grows greater with the passing of the years. Above are typical views of the celebration and the various participants.

Upper left: Little "Cookie" Donaldson was a rabbit on Mardi Gras day. Here she is looking for a dog to bite her hot dog.

Top center: A group of child masqueraders on the streets.

Middle center: The King, Queen and Court of the Girl Reserves and Hi-Y Carnival Ball of 1939 of the Albert Wicker Junior High School.

Center: Yvonne Mary Johnson, queen; Paul Morine Saizon, king; Gwendolyn Theresa Romain, page; Maids Evangeline Bernetta Khaton, Bernice Barnestine Dede, Selina Elizabeth Gray, Louise Katherine Harvey, Lynn Gray, Dora Alma Tuney; Dukes Robert Peter Smith, Curtis Emanuel De Muoy, Roland Joseph Delarge, Wilfred Fobbs Dennis, Walter Carney Williams, Severin Nathaniel Goods.

Upper right: One of the thousands of little pirates seen on the streets Mardi Gras day.

Lower left: Benjamin Powell of Craig School, who was crowned king of kings at the Children's Mardi Gras party.

Lower right: Adrien Anderson of McDonough 37, who was crowned queen of queens.

Bottom center: Kings and queens from the ten public schools in New Orleans at the Children's Mardi Gras party given by the Parent-Teachers Association for the benefit of their scholarship fund.

Wife of Champ Joe Louis Steals Show at Mardi Gras

Annual Festival Ends In Blaze of Glory

NEW ORLEANS (ANP)—New Orleans settled back into routine and the Lenten season of 40 days after one of the most brilliant carnival celebrations of all-time that culminated in Mardi Gras day last Tuesday. Visitors galore from nearly every city in the country including New York, Detroit, Los Angeles, Washington, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, etc., flooded the old Crescent City for the gala occasion.

Masking in the streets, parades and all day dancing filled with color and gaiety, natives of the city and their visitors put in a day of wild fun with the town going as mad as a corral of "jitterbugs." The Zulus with Allen James as king, and Miss Odette DeLille as queen, staged their most spectacular parade and gained honor after honor as they wound in snake-like fashion through the streets of the city.

One of the first stops after King Zulu and his tribe had disembarked from the royal yacht at South Claiborne Street, was at the reviewing stand in front of the city hall where he was greeted with a toast by Mayor Robert Maestri. It was the first time in the history of carnival that a Negro parade has been routed thru St. Charles Street and been received by the mayor.

Later thousands miled around on Jackson Avenue, where the king received his queen and toasted her with champagne. It was here that Mrs. Marva Trotter Barrow, wife of heavyweight champion Joe Louis, presented the queen with the keys to the city. Mrs. Barrow was attired in a silver fox coat, peaked hat, fuchia gloves and veil. Maids to the queen were Misses Dorothy Johnson, Olga Fortin, Mary Pillette and Beatrice Joseph, all dressed in blue velvet, with gold caps and royal collars.

Practically swamped by admirers, and caught between rounds of a social whirl of teas, breakfast dances, carnical balls, and autograph seekers, Mrs. Barrow was a welcome guest to New Orleans famous carnival season. A guest of Mrs. Sara Vanquelin in Maurepas St., Mrs. Barrow confessed being tired after a sample of the Mardi Gras here.

She attended balls given by the Bunch Club, Rhinestones and Black Pirates, and also a dance at which Earl Hines and his orchestra of Chicago played. Mrs. Barrow arrived Friday, February 17, and was immediately sought out by the Crescent City social clan. She visited, on a sight seeing trip, the old French Quarter of the city known as the Vieux Carre, antique shops in Royal St., the various schools and other points of interest.

Champion Joe Louis phoned her several times, and it is expected that she will join him in Los Angeles where he is training for his next bout against Bob Roper.

Five floats comprised the Zulus parade, the king heading the procession upon the first float. Cliff Thomas as Chief Ubangi and his warriors on the second, Allen Leon as chief snake-man on the third titled, "The Snake Man," H. C Hicks headed the float known as "The Witch Doctor," and Alonzo Butler was in charge of the fifth titled, "The Head Hunters."

Charles Fisher served as the mayor of Zululand, and John L Metoyer, president of the Zulu Social and Pleasure Club, was on hand to supervise the parade. Manuel Bernard was chief duke of the day.

The champion's wife was presented wtih an autographed cocoanut, the customary souvenir of the Zulus, and Mrs. Gertrude Geddes Willis, president of the undertaking company, and Dr. W. A. Willis made welcome addresses.

The Jolly Boys and Girls parade with three beautiful floats were also entertained during the day. Charles Essex was king and Miss Nancy Mitchell queen. Maids were the Misses Dorothy Jackson, Bernice Malrey, Hazel Decuir and Agnes Woodard. Train-bearers, Marion and Deloris Pauffey and smeared upon the foreheads of the parade's theme was "The Jolly Gold Diggers of 1939."

Sack clothes were donned by the devout and ashes of penitence were worshippers in Catholic churches beginning the Lenten season at midnight last Tuesday and continuing for 40 days.

Mobile, Ala., Register
February 22, 1939

Mardi Gras Fete Held By Colored Residents Of City

King Tutte And Queen Parade At Night After Afternoon Civic Affair

The glitter of Mardi Gras visited David Avenue Tuesday night for the first time, as colored residents paid homage to their carnival king and his queen.

Two floats from downtown processions were used in the parade which followed coronation of Winston A. Allan as King Tutte and Ruby Morgan, Dunbar High School student, as queen.

The coronation took place at the Colored Community Center, after which the parade wended northward to the avenue, countermarching up and down that thoroughfare. Manuel Carter was marshal.

Afternoon Parade Also

The Mobile Colored Carnival Association, a group separate from that which conducted the evening parade, staged its procession at 3:30 p.m., with marching groups, decorated bicycles, pedestrian maskers and a number of floats.

Colored organizations represented were that branch of the Boy Scouts. Broad Street School, Dunbar High School. Williamson School, the colored Y. M. C. A., Alabama State Teachers' College and others.

Band and drum corps included those of St. Peter Claver's School. Most Pure Heart of Mary School. 'Bama State Band. Excelsior Band. Melody Masters, a clown band and a jazz orchestra from a traveling minstrel show.

Prize Awards Made

Prizes were awarded as follows: Bicycles, Samuel T. McDaniels, first; Juliette Frazier, second; Mary Williams, third; Tommie Loftin, Jr., fourth.

Individual maskers, Leo Nathan as Little Red Riding Hood, first; John I. Smith, second; Clyde White, third, and William Ivory, fourth.

Marching groups, Williamson School, sponsored by Katherine Bennett, first; Broad Street School, sponsored by Florence Howard, second; Emerson School, sponsored by Jamie Buck, third.

Floats: Los Amigos Club of Dunbar High School, sponsored by Elinor Nelson, first; "Three Men In A Boat," sponsored by Clarence Roberson and Esau Smith, postmen, second; Boy Scout encampment, sponsored by James O'Neil, third.

The prize list for the afternoon parade was $70.

Daytona Beach, Fla. News
March 5, 1939

Orange Festival Ball To Feature An Old Time Cake Walk

An "orange festival ball" at the Bath and Tennis club Thursday night will have negro employes from local hotels taking part in an old-time cake walk. Hotel Ormond, Princess Issena, Coquina, Geneva and Osceola will be represented. Saturday is the weekly club dance, with the orange festival tea dance next Sunday afternoon.

Friday night a number of dinner parties were in progress at the club. Among them: Mrs. William Rawle Brown who entertained Mrs. Glenn T. Phillips, and Miss Barbara Phillips, Northville, Mich., Dr. H. H. Handorf, Mrs. Earl B. Nelson, Miss Anne Nelson and Miss Mary Nelson, Detroit; L. Gnagle.

Mrs. H. C. Hale had as her guests, Mrs. Harry Andrews, Mr. and Mrs. T. C. White and Mr. and Mrs. Meeds.

Mrs. Christy entertained at cocktails. Her guests were Mr. and Mrs. S. R. Slaymaker, Mrs. John Zimmerman, Mrs. S. R. Slaymaker, Jr., Miss Eva Stoner.

Memphis Tenn. Com'rcial Appeal
March 30, 1939

King Zoser Awakes —The Fun Begins

There's a little more whispering than usual going around down on Beale Street these days and most of it is about the new secret society formed for the Cotton Makers' Jubilee, negro division of the Memphis Cotton Carnival, May 9-14.

Official name of the newborn organization is Zoser, one of the warring kings of ancient Egypt who ruled over that mighty nation in 3000 B. C. and, according to legend, took quite a bit of time off from wars to have his share of fun.

Organizers won't say a thing about prospective members or about the selection of the group's king and queen, one of whom will probably be masked, but one thing is certain.

Following in the footsteps of Zoser, they are going to have a big party sometime during the festive week.

Murfreesboro, Tenn. News-Journal
May 11, 1939

Beale Streeters Open "Hottest" Party Of Year

MEMPHIS, Tenn., May 11.—(AP)—Jubilant Beale Streeters danced and marched to the throbbing of tom-toms last night as they celebrated opening of the famous Negro thoroughfare's biggest (and hottest) party of the year—the Cotton Makers Jubilee, Negro division of the 1939 Cotton Carnival.

There was little dignity on the street where the blues began as gay crowds, whites and blacks alike massed shortly before sundown. Dusky subjects roared with enthusiasm as they watched the inaugural event of the festival, the picturesque coronation parade which moved up the dingy street from the Mississippi River levee front to Handy Park where jubilee royalty began their reign.

In the van of the marchers came King B. F. McCleave, 59-year-old doctor-dentist, and his 29-year-old queen, Hattie Mae Warren, seated atop a litter patterned after those of African tribal chieftains.

Stalwart "warriors" bore the litter while husky blacks squatted along the street to lend aboriginal atmosphere to the procession.

Simultaneously with the coronation of the king and queen, music-minded Beale Street unveiled its new dance creation, "Dark Rapture," executed in jungle pattern by girls attired in grass skirts, painted warriors and a "witch doctor" complete with horse's tail and a voo doo rattle.

In other parts of the city, white celebrators moved into the second day of the colorful Cotton Carnival opened formally last night with the arrival of King Cotton and his queen, Chester Lawrence, cotton man, and Elizabeth Farnsworth, 21-year-old Memphis society girl.

Private balls, street dancing and parades will feature the remaining days of the festival which closes Sunday.

Hospitals — 1938

CARNIVAL - 1939

1939 THE SAVANNAH JOURNAL

Minister Charges Negroes Given "Monkey Part"

CHARLESTON Palace as a whole.

Speaking in the Inter ra cial meeting last week, Eld er Jesse Beard of this city, stated point blank that the part allotted Negroes during the past 6 years in the Aza- lea FFestival was far from key end," a part fra from being characteristic of Negro life here, it is learned that possibilities of having a Negro float in the pardae are good.

Elder Beard struck at the role played by street huck- sters each year o nthe Bat- tery for which prizes are awarded for best criers of street sellers.

He charged it to be amuse ing the whites and a gross re flection on the colored pop-

Dr. Burghardt, pastor of the Unitarian Church and chairman of the Inter-Racial Committee heard the re- marks and secretly contacted Mr. Tecklenberg, Azalea chairman and informed Eld- er Beard a few days ago that a float or something more re presentative would be given Negroes. A committee, consisting of Elder Beard, Rev. C. S. Ledbetter and Rev. E. P. Ellis was appoint ed by the Ministerial Union to investigate the possibili- ties. At the present writ- ing negotiation is undre way for conference with Mr. Tecklenberg on th possibili- ty.

Nashville Tenn. Tennessean
May 11, 1939

'Dark Rapture' Grips Beale Street As Negroes Open Cotton Jubilee

Dignity Cast Aside as Dusky Rhythm Reigns On Thoroughfare Where Blues Began; Whites' Celebration Ends Second Dav

MEMPHIS, Tenn., May 10—(AP)—Jubilant Beale Streeters danced and marched to the throbbing of tom-toms tonight as they celebrated the opening of the famous Negro thoroughfare's biggest (and hottest) party of the year—the Cotton Mak- ers Jubilee, Negro division of the 1939 Cotton Carnival.

There was little dignity on the street where the blues began as gay crowds, whites and blacks alike, massed shortly before sundown. Dusky subjects roared with enthu- siasm as they watched the inaugu- ral event of the festival, the pic- turesque coronation parade which moved up the dingy street from the Mississippi River levee front to Handy Park where jubilee royalty began their reign.

KING, QUEEN CROWNED

In the van of the marchers came King B. F. McCleave, 59-year-old doctor-dentist, and his 29-year-old queen, Hattie Mae Warren, seated atop a litter patterned after those of African tribal chieftains.

Stalwart "warriors" bore the lit- ter while husky blacks squatted along the street to lend aboriginal atmosphere to the procession.

Simultaneously with the corona- tion of the king and queen, music- minded Beale Street unveiled its new dance creation, "Dark Rap- ture," executed in jungle pattern by girls attired in grass skirts, painted warriors and a "witch doc- tor" complete with horse's tail and a voo doo rattle.

WHITES CELEBRATE

In other parts of the city, white celebrators moved into the second day of the colorful Cotton Carni- val opened formally last night with the arrival of King Cotton and his queen, Chester Lowrance, cotton man, and Elizabeth Farnsworth, 21-year-old Memphis society girl.

Private balls, street dancing and parades will feature the remaining days of the festival which closes Sunday.

Birmingham, Ala. News
July 9, 1939

WATERMELON FIGHT—This is how the Fourth of July was celebrated in Bessemer. The top picture shows a group of prisoners released from the Bessemer jail to engage in one of the free for all scrambles for melons on the city's main street. Ten days off sentences will be given two winners.

Fire hose is played on the melon scramblers, center view. Some of this year's crowd that turned out for the fun is seen in the lower picture after one of the bouts.

Bessemer Solves Problem Of Safe And Sane—But Hilarious—July Fourth

BESSEMER, Ala.—Bessemer went down in history this Fourth of July as one of the few cities in the country where a firecracker wasn't heard all day long, one of the still fewer where no accidents of any kind occurred throughout the day and the only city where Independence Day was celebrated with a series of scraps over watermelons.

You can ask any Bessemer citizen—ask Jap Bryant, its mayor, particularly—why they had such a safe and sane Fourth, and each will promptly exclaim:

"Watermelons!"

What they did was pile up the melons at street corners and let a bunch of boys scramble for them while men on the sidelines directed fire hose on the scene. Lads who came out with the most melons won cash prizes.

Separate contests were held for white and Negro boys. In one of the latter scrambles were five prisoners from the Bessemer Jail. Mayor Bryant promised the two winners 10 days off their sentences. Last year he offered a 30-day deduction to the winner. As the victorious prisoner had but five days coming to him in jail, he was allowed 25 days ott any future sentence he might receive. This year he was committed to jail again and enjoyed the privilege of having 25 days taken off his sentence. This prompted Mayor Bryant to make the prize a 10-day deduction.

The two who won sentence cuts this year were Erskine Johnson, serving a fine for drunkenness, and George Key, sentenced for gambling. Getting those melons was hard labor, they said after the scramble, but they added it was worth it.

Mayor Bryant thought of the watermelon fight idea for a Fourth of July celebration 27 years ago. It grew out of another idea started three years before that of giving a watermelon as a prize for the team that could keep the most sacks filled with sawdust on its side of the street.

The final idea of having hose play on the scramblers is a finishing touch of which Mayor Bryant is secretly proud. Prouder still is he of a record of no serious casualties in all these years.

Three scrambles were held this year on three strategic corners of Nineteenth Street, Bessemer's main thoroughfare, and Second, Third and Fourth Avenues. Some 60 melons were donated by the city's merchants and the scrap was made for 20 melons at a time. One young man got eight melons, which was considered pretty good scrambling.

"We hope to continue having our watermelon scrambles," said Mayor Bryant. "It gives the people something to see and peps them up and keeps those who might be inclined that way out of trouble. Yes, sir, we've found the watermelon more uccessful than the firecracker for elebrating the Fourth of July."

Columbia, S. C. Record
July 5, 1939

Nation's Strangest July 4 Celebration Held in Aiken

AIKEN, July 5.—More than 10,000 negroes crowded the campus of Bettis academy, negro normal school on the Aiken-Edgefield county line, for the nation's strangest Fourth of July celebration yesterday. It was the 59th annual such affair.

In a field of burning-hot sand, around which white and black spectators formed themselves in a square, numbers of youthful drill teams danced and pranced to a tom-tom-like beating of drums for a prize of $5.

Uniformed in hap-hazard fashion and carrying guns carved from wood, the various teams marched, counter-marched, gyrated and whirled in strange formations at the commands of their captains, who chanted their orders in rhythm. The teams some composed of both men and women chanted back the commands.

One team filed by the four judges and shook hands with them to the beat of the drums and to their own stomping feet.

The drill companies, whose performances are more like primitive tribal dances than drills, come from various sections of this and other counties. A team from eastern Aiken county has won the prize for the last several years.

Dating back to the founding of the school, the celebration defies explanation. Prof. A. R. Nicholson, the school's head, says he does not know how the weird ceremony started.

A carnival spirit prevaded the whole affair as always. There were long lanes of make-shift, brush-covered stalls where the negroes milled to buy and eat fried fish, pork chops, fried chicken, watermelon, ice cream and pop.

For those who did not take part in the drilling, there was a modern dance in the school's recreation hall where the carefree throng trucked and big-appled until late into the night.

Montgomery, Ala., Advertiser
July 4, 1939

NEGROES AND THE FOURTH OF JULY

It is just possible that the Fourth of July means more to Negroes than to whites, notwithstanding that the Declaration of Independence did not apply to their ancestors. We have yet to talk personally with a Negro, who if he could get away from his work did not have plans that included a picnic on the Fourth.

White folks discovered and established the festive picnic, but it is the Negro that gave it flavor and spirit, and so, we doubt not, greater charm. Unfortunately white folks can only guess at the contribution which Negroes have made to the American picnic, since they have not the privilege of participating and so observing at first hand the tempo, the meter and the technique of these affairs.

White folks couldn't have a barbecue or a picnic without the aid of Negroes, but Negroes—who rarely have barbecues, these being too expensive—have their picnics without the aid of white folks. They don't need any help on a holiday. All they need is a day-off and a little pocket change. They have a native genius for self-amusement.

CARNIVAL - 1939

Court of Queen of Love and Beauty

Argus 10-20-39 Baltimore, Md.

Left to right—Miss Grace Rogers, Miss Nana Gaikens, Miss Bannister, Miss Regina Steele (Queen) Miss Georgia Williams (retiring queen) (Insert) Miss Ann Watt. Front—little girl attendants.
Photo By Young

LOUISIANA

Coconuts

June 12-24-39

It is Shrove Tuesday in New Orleans. Early on this Mardi Gras morning, before the white folks' Rex comes in splendor to Canal Street, the Negroes are having their own carnival. Up squalid New Basin glides a barge, canopied in sacking, to the wharf at Rampart Street and Howard Avenue. Off the barge strides the King of the Zulus, right royal in black underwear, a hula skirt of sea grass, a tin crown. His sceptre is a broomstick topped by a snow-white rooster. Preceding him is his Queen, behind are his capering dukes. The King mounts his throne—a decrepit easy chair on a mule-drawn wagon. Up darktown's Rampart Street whoop King and courtiers, laughing at the whites on the royal way. At 7 p. m. their parade ends, and the drinking and the loving begin. It is carnival for the merriest of people. It is also dark satire on the pretentious, elite Mardi Gras courts of the white folks' Rex, Momus, Comus, Proteus, the Druids.

John Metoyer, an olive-brown pixie who founded the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club in a woodshed 30 years ago, had never been King of the Zulus. He hardly cared. As daily host to the Zulus at his café (now called the Brown Bomber) on Perdido Street, he was the uncrowned soul of Zulu. And at last, this year, John Metoyer was elected King.

But never will King John ride in tinsel-crowned glory up the Street of the old Rampart. Last week, at 47, John Metoyer died. At the Brown Bomber the mourning Zulus gathered, planned a proper funeral with five bands, pallbearers in Mardi Gras skirts of grass, and all the Zulu mourners carrying coconuts. The coconuts would be laid on John Metoyer's bier, that he might fight his way to joy with the heavenly Queen of the Amazon Islands. Mourners hoped that John Metoyer's boyhood friend and Zulu clubmember, famed Zulu Louis ("Satchelmouth") Armstrong, would come down from Manhattan's Harlem with his trumpet to lead the bands in *There Never Was and There Never Will Be a King Like Me.*

In Harlem, Satchelmouth announced that he could not go to the funeral. "Poor John," he mourned, "he was a great guy." Poor John's relatives announced that they and not the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club were running this funeral, reduced it to a respectable affair with only one band, pall bearers in tuxedos and white gloves, no grass skirts, no coconuts. Said John Metoyer's heir apparent to the Zulu presidency, Charles Fisher: "If it was me and I died right now, I'd have the biggest funeral in the history of New Orleans. I'd want exactly five bands and all that was due me. I'd want John Metoyer to do that for me, with all the trimmings."